

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 CAIRO 23103 01 OF 02 281532Z
ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 IO-13 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05
H-01 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01
SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 SSM-03 /085 W
-----023276 281544Z /43

R 281521Z DEC 77
FM AMEMBASSY CAIRO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3561
INFO AMCONSUL ALEXANDRIA
AMEMBASSY AMMAN
AMEMBASSY BEIRUT
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS
AMCONSUL JERUSALEM
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMEMBASSY KUWAIT
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 CAIRO 23103

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: EG IS XF
SUBJECT: EGYPTIAN JOURNALISTS DOWN ON BEGIN

SUMMARY: CONVERSATIONS WITH EGYPTIAN JOURNALISTS
REPRESENTING SPECTRUM POLITICAL PERSUASIONS INDICATE
COMMON CONCLUSION THAT ISRAEL HAS NOT RESPONDED TO
SADAT INITIATIVES, BEGIN INTRANSIGENT, PROGNOSIS
FOR FUTURE POOR. SALVATION FOR PEACE PROCESS SAID
TO BE U.S. PRESSURE -- BEGIN REPORTEDLY TOLD SADAT
HE NEEDS THIS TO MODIFY HIS POSITION. THEY ALLEGE
EGYPTIAN MILITARY, DIPLOMATS, INTELLECTUALS, AND
GENERAL PUBLIC EQUALLY DEPRESSED BY OUTCOME
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 CAIRO 23103 01 OF 02 281532Z

ISMAILIA SUMMIT. SUPPORT FOR SADAT REMAINS HIGH
BUT FEAR EXPRESSED THAT THIS COULD ERODE IF THERE
IS NO DEMONSTRABLE PROGRESS SOON. END SUMMARY.

1. EMBOFFS MET DEC 27 WITH THREE AHRAH JOURNALISTS
COVERING PEACE NEGOTIATIONS. ALL WERE DEPRESSED AND
PESSIMISTIC OVER FUTURE PROSPECTS. GENERAL VIEW WAS

THAT ISRAELIS HAVE NOT BUDGED DESPITE SADAT'S INITIATIVES. SADAT SAID TO BE EXPOSED, ISOLATED FROM OTHER ARAB STATES, AND IN DANGER OF GETTING BEYOND HIS OWN PUBLIC. CONVERSATION HIGHLIGHTS FOLLOW.

2. HAMDI FUAD. AHRAH'S DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT BEGAN CONVERSATION WITH OBSERVATION SITUATION "SAD, VERY SAD." HAMDI THOUGHT ISMAILIA MEETINGS HAD BEEN "DISASTER;" EGYPTIAN PUBLIC HAD EXPECTED DRAMATIC BREAKTHROUGH; ISRAELIS HAD GIVEN "NOTHING." IF ONE READ BEGIN'S RESPONSES CLOSELY, ARGUED FUAD, IT APPARENT ISRAELI LEADERSHIP MAINTAINING SAME POSITIONS IT HAS HELD OVER YEARS. BEGIN PLAN IDENTICAL IN CONCEPT TO ALLON DESIGN; PALESTINIAN RIGHTS STILL IGNORED. MILITARY OCCUPATION WOULD REMAIN, ONLY ITS NAME WOULD BE CHANGED. FUAD SAW NOTHING IN BEGIN'S PROPOSALS FOR INHABITANTS OF WEST BANK AND GAZA OR, INDEED, FOR OTHER ARABS.

3. SINAI. ONLY GIVE, IN FUAD'S VIEWS, WAS WITH REFERENCE TO SINAI AND EVEN THERE ISRAELIS WERE LESS FORTHCOMING THAN EXPECTED. ISRAEL PROPOSED TWO-STAGE PLAN, WITH ULTIMATE WITHDRAWAL TO BE THREE-FIVE YEARS AFTER PEACE TREATY. HOWEVER, ISRAEL INSISTED RAFAH SETTLEMENTS WOULD REMAIN CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 CAIRO 23103 01 OF 02 281532Z

AND SETTLERS WOULD BE PERMITTED KEEP "DEFENSIVE" ARMS. SADAT TOLD EGYPTIAN JOURNALISTS HE REJECTED BOTH DEMANDS. MILITARY WITHDRAWAL MUST BE ACCOMPLISHED WITHIN SIX MONTHS AND SETTLEMENTS MUST BE REMOVED. FUAD THOUGHT THESE DIFFERENCES, UNLIKE WEST BANK/GAZA, BRIDGEABLE -- ALTHOUGH THEY INDICATE WIDE GULF BETWEEN EGYPTIAN AND ISRAELI THINKING ON ULTIMATE PEACE SETTLEMENT.

4. SADAT. FUAD SAID PRESIDENT, SPEAKING TO LOCAL JOURNALISTS FOLLOWING BEGIN'S DEPARTURE, HAD BEEN UPSET BY PROCEEDINGS. SADAT, REPORTEDLY, TOOK PARTICULAR EXCEPTION TO BEGIN'S ASSOCIATING HIM WITH VIEW THAT 1967 WAR HAD BEEN -- FOR ISRAELIS -- DEFENSIVE ACTION. FUAD THOUGHT SADAT'S REFERENCE IN AGREED STATEMENT TO "JUDEA AND SAMARIA" WOULD HURT HIM IN ARAB WORLD, AND MIGHT DAMAGE PRESIDENT POLITICALLY AT HOME.

5. PROCESS. DESPITE MEAGER OUTCOME, SADAT INSTRUCTED EGYPTIAN REPORTERS NOT TO BE DISCOURAGED BUT TO REGARD ISMAILIA AS BEGINNING OF PROCESS.

MINISTERIAL LEVEL COMMITTEES WOULD BEGIN SHORTLY AFTER NEW YEAR; MOMENTUM WOULD BE MAINTAINED. FUAD WAS NOT CONVINCED BUT INDICATED PRESS COMMENTARY WOULD BE UPBEAT. HE EXPRESSED DOUBT WHETHER PESSIMISTIC APPRAISAL HE PREPARED FOR NEXT DAY'S AHRAH WOULD BE PRINTED (IT WASN'T).

6. DEPRESSION. FUAD SAID HIS ASSESSMENT SHARED BY EGYPT'S DIPLOMATIC AND MILITARY ELITE. QUOTED MINDEF GAMASY AND CAIRO CONFERENCE REP MEGUID TO

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 CAIRO 23103 02 OF 02 281539Z

ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 IO-13 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05

H-01 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01

SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 SSM-03 /085 W

-----023342 281544Z /43

R 281521Z DEC 77

FM AMEMBASSY CAIRO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3562

INFO AMCONSUL ALEXANDRIA

AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

AMCONSUL JERUSALEM

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 02 OF 02 CAIRO 23103

SUPPORT THIS. BOTH, HE MAINTAINED, HAD HOPED FOR GREATER ISRAELI FLEXIBILITY. ON MILITARY AND DIPLOMATIC FRONTS THEY REPORTEDLY CONCLUDED ISRAELIS HAD GIVEN SADAT LITTLE WITH WHICH TO WORK.

7. PRESSURE. ACCORDING FUAD, SADAT CLAIMED BEGIN TOLD HIM THAT IN ORDER MAKE FURTHER CONCESSIONS HE (BEGIN) NEEDS ADDITIONAL PRESSURE, WHICH HE ASKED EGYPTIAN PRESIDENT PROVIDE. FUAD OPINED REAL

PRESSURE WOULD HAVE TO COME FROM U.S.G. AND HE
URGED THIS BE APPLIED QUICKLY.

8. HODA TAWFIQ. HAMDI CLAIMED HIS WIFE,
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 CAIRO 23103 02 OF 02 281539Z

GUMHURIYYA DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT HODA TAWFIQ,
IS EVEN MORE UPSET OVER EVENTS. HODA WAS SUFFI-
CIENTLY IRRITATED BY BEGIN'S ANSWERS AT PRESS
CONFERENCE (AND ISRAELI JOURNALISTS' BOORISH
BEHAVIOR) TO DESCRIBE ISRAELI PM AS "REAL BASTARD."
HAMDI THOUGHT LAST PHRASE WAS CAPTURED FOR ISRAELI
AUDIENCE BY OPEN MICROPHONE OF ISRAELI RADIO.
HODA, IN ANY CASE, HOPES IT WAS.

9. LUFTI AL KHULI. MARXIST JOURNALIST DESCRIBED
ISMAILIA OUTCOME AS "HOPELESS." SAID THERE HAD
BEEN MINIMUM MOVEMENT ON SINAI, NONE ON OTHER
FRONTS. CLAIMED ONE RESULT WOULD BE THAT JORDAN
WOULD STAY OUT OF NEGOTIATING PROCESS. THIS, HE
CONCLUDED, WILL INSURE DIVISIONS REMAIN -- ASAD
WILL FEEL VINDICATED. AL KHULI VIGOROUSLY MAIN-
TAINED BEGIN GAVE SADAT "NOTHING;" SAID HE "VERY
FEARFUL" OVER OUTCOME SADAT'S INITIATIVES.

10. YOUNGER GENERATION. MOST SUCCINCT COMMENT ON
ISMAILIA CAME FROM JUNIOR AHRAM DIPLOMATIC REPORTER
HIDAYET ABDEL NABI. SHE VEHEMENTLY MAINTAINED
THAT NO MORE ISRAELIS SHOULD BE INVITED TO VISIT
EGYPT. HIDAYET FOUND ISRAELI JOURNALISTS
PERSONALLY OFFENSIVE AND "PUSHY." THOUGHT BEGIN'S
REPLIES TO SERIOUS QUESTIONS FLIPPANT, AND INDICA-
TIVE HE NOT APPROACHING PEACE NEGOTIATIONS
SERIOUSLY. HIDAYET, MORE EMOTIONAL THAN OTHERS,
WAS UNCHARACTERISTICALLY ANGRY TO POINT OF LOSING
ABILITY EXPRESS HERSELF ARTICULATELY IN DISCUSSING
BEGIN VISIT.

11. COMMENT. ABOVE REPRESENTS SAMPLE REPRESEN-
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 CAIRO 23103 02 OF 02 281539Z

TATIVES SINGLE JOURNAL. HOWEVER, INDIVIDUALS
CONCERNED RUN ACROSS BROAD EGYPTIAN BODY POLITIC.
FUAD IS SQUARE IN CENTER, AS IS HIS WIFE, ALTHOUGH
BOTH ARE PARTICULARLY CLOSE TO FORMER FONMIN FAHMY
AND MAY REFLECT HIS VIEWS TO SOME EXTENT.

AL KHULI'S SENTIMENTS ARE PREDICTABLE FOR PROMINENT LEFTISTS. ABDEL NABI IS CLOSE TO PALESTINIANS IN CAIRO -- BUT IS BY NO MEANS IN THEIR CAMP. WE SUSPECT VIEWS EXPRESSED ARE SHARED BY MOST, IF NOT ALL OF MORE ARTICULATE JOURNALISTIC COMMUNITY. FOR MOMENT, AT LEAST, IT UNLIKELY THESE VIEWS WILL FIND EXPRESSION IN PUBLIC PRINT: WORD IS OUT THAT PAPERS ARE TO ACCENTUATE POSITIVE. NEVERTHELESS, IN CAIRO'S INCESTUOUS INTELLECTUAL COMMUNITY THESE CONCLUSIONS WILL BE CIRCULATED AS FAST AS IF THEY HAD BEEN BANNER HEADLINED ON AHARAM'S PAGE ONE. ONE UNFORTUNATE RESULT OF DISAPPOINTMENT OVER ISMAILIA IS THAT OUR JOURNALIST CONTACTS ARE RETURNING TO CLICHES OF PAST, CONJURING UP STEREOTYPES OF ISRAELIS, AND MOUTHING IMPOSSIBILITY OF ARABS AND ISRAEL EVER REACHING PEACEFUL ACCORD. EILTS

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PRESS COMMENTS, PEACE PLANS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 28-Dec-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977CAIRO23103
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D770483-0516
Format: TEL
From: CAIRO
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t19771213/aaaaakkk.tel
Line Count: 241
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: a4035efc-c188-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION NEA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 5
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 16-Mar-2005 12:00:00 am
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 123191
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: EGYPTIAN JOURNALISTS DOWN ON BEGIN SUMMARY: CONVERSATIONS WITH EGYPTIAN JOURNALISTS REPRESENTING SPECTRUM POLITICAL PERSUASIONS INDICA
TAGS: SOPN, PDEV, MPOL, EG, IS, XF, (BEGIN, MENAHEM)
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/a4035efc-c188-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009